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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

MATTHEW D. STRINGER  
Serial No: 09/997,363  
Filed: November 30, 2001  
For: LOCKING AND SECURING DEVICE

Exr. A.C. Chin Shue  
Art Unit: 3632  
Conf. No. 3488

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Commissioner of Patents  
and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

February 2003

AMENDMENT

Sir:

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Patent Office Action dated November 5, 2002. Please amend the application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

At page 12, line 17, delete the word "compressive".

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Fig. 2 shows the locking and securing device 10 in an open and unsecured position. The securing mechanism 80 is held or suspended from the side rail 14 by the engagement member 110. In the embodiment shown, the engagement member 110 has a substantially L-shape; however, other shapes are also within the contemplated scope of the invention. The pin 82 of the securing mechanism 80